

## 2 Timothy

2 Timothy is Paul's last will and testament to his spiritual son Timothy. Writing from a Roman prison cell, Paul imparts his final words of wisdom and encouragement to Timothy who is ministering in the midst of opposition and hardship in Ephesus. Paul stresses the importance of godly living, preaching the Word, and preparing for the coming apostasy within the church. Underlying all that is the truth that God's word is the only foundation strong enough to withstand persecution from without and problems from within.

### INTRODUCTION

In this letter, Paul commissions Timothy to faithfully carry on the work that the condemned apostle must now relinquish. This "combat manual" exhorts Timothy to put his spiritual equipment of the Word of God to constant use in order to overcome growing obstacles to the spread of the Gospel. Timothy was in great need of encouragement because of the hardships that he was facing. Paul used this letter to instruct him on how to handle persecution from without and dissension and deception from within. As a spiritual father, Paul urged his son Timothy to overcome his natural timidity and boldly proclaim the Gospel even if it meant that he would suffer for doing so.

### AUTHOR

Since the early 19th century, the Pastoral Epistles have been attacked more than any other Pauline Epistles on the issue of authenticity. The similarity of these epistles requires that they be treated as a unit in terms of authorship because they stand or fall together.

The external evidence solidly supports the conservative position that Paul wrote the letters to Timothy and Titus. Postapostolic Church fathers and historians allude to them as Paul's writings. Only Romans and 1 Corinthians have better evidence among the Pauline epistles.

Paul's last epistle received the title *Pros Timotheon B*, the "Second to Timothy." When Paul's letters were collected together the *B* was probably added to distinguish this letter from the first letter he wrote to Timothy.

### DATE & SETTING

The authorship of the pastoral epistles requires Paul's release from his Roman imprisonment (Acts 28), the continuation of his missionary endeavors, and his imprisonment for a second time in Rome. Unfortunately, the order of events can only be reconstructed from hints, because there is no concurrent history paralleling Acts to Paul's last years.

It is widely accepted that Paul wrote 2 Timothy in the fall of A.D. 67, hoping that Timothy would be able to visit him before the approaching winter (2 Timothy 4:21). Timothy evidently was in Ephesus at the time of this letter (2 Timothy 1:18, 4:19). Tychicus may have been the bearer of this letter (2 Timothy 4:12).